PERIODICAL, No. 28.

MINUTES

OF THE

TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

Eastern Baptist Association,

HELD WITH THE BAPTIST CHURCH IN ST. CATHARINES,

JUNE 18th and 19th, 1847:

TOGETHER WITH THE

CIRCULAR LETTER.

REV. A. CLEGHORN, DRUMMONDVILLE,
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

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1847.

MINUTES

OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EASTERN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

Held with the Church in St. Catharines, June 18th and 19th, 1847.

Rev. A. CLEGHORN, Drummondville, *Corresponding Secretary.*

ST. CATHERINES, Friday, *June* 18, 1847.

I. The Association convened at 10 o'clock, A.M., when Rev. R. Boyd, of Brockville, (those appointed to preach on the occasion being absent,) preached the opening sermon, from Col. iii. 2, "Set your affections on things above."

II. The Association then organized by appointing Rev. A. Booker, Moderator, and Rev. A. Cleghorn, Clerk.

III. The Bye-Laws being read, the following Committees were appointed, viz. :—

1. A Prudential Committee—Rev. W. Hewson, R. Kilborn, A. Havens, J. Price, and D. Way.

2. Committee of Examination, &c.—G. Silver and W. Bright.

IV. Association adjourned for one hour.

Afternoon Session.

Prayer by Rev. G. Silver.

V. Delegates were then received and appointed as follows:—

Associations.	Delegates from.	Delegates to.
Niagara. 2d Wednesday in June. At Sommerset	Rev. W. Rees and Rev. W. Sawyer	Rev. W. Hewson and Rev. A. Cleghorn.
Western. 1st Friday in June. At Lobo	.....	Rev. A. Booker and Rev. A. Cleghorn.
Grand River. 2d Friday in June. At St. George	Rev. J. Winterbotham & Rev. S. T. Griswold..	Rev. J. Vanloon, jr., and Rev. D. Way.
Orleans, New York. 1st Wednesday in June. East Carlton	Rev. W. Rees	Rev. W. Hewson and Rev. A. Cleghorn.
Haldimand. 4th Friday in June. Markham	Rev. J. Marsh	Rev. J. M. Cramp, R. Boyd, S. T. Griswold, W. Hewson, & Bro. W. Bright.
Buffalo. 1st Tuesday in September. At ——	.....	Rev. W. Hewson and Bro. J. Dolbeer.
Johnstown. 1st Thursday in July. At Kitley	Rev. R. Boyd.....	Rev. R. Boyd.

VI. Deputations and Agents received as follows:—From Canada Baptist Missionary Society, Rev. J. M. Cramp and Rev. R. Boyd; from the American Baptist Missionary Union, Rev. S. T. Griswold.

VII. Visiting brethren were invited to a seat.

VIII. Rev. W. Hewson and Rev. A. Cleghorn were appointed to represent the Association in the Meeting of the Canada Baptist Union at Toronto.

IX. The Letters from the churches were then read, from which the following statistics were taken:—

Number.	CHURCHES.	DELEGATES.	Increase			Decrease.				Total.
			Baptism.	Letter.	Restoration.	Dismission.	Exclusion.	Death.	Dropped.	
1	Beamsville	Rev. G. Silver, J. Beam, R. Kilborn, J. Kitchen, T. S. Hill	...	...	1	4	4	...	...	160
2	Canboro	No information.								
3	St. Catharines...	Rev. W. Hewson, A. Havens, J. Dolbeer, W. Bright, S. Phelps	...	2	...	7	10	...	...	63
4	Louth, Jordan...	———, A. Foster, J. Price, W. Cortnage	...	...	...	...	2	..	...	49
5	Pt. Colborn.....	No information.								
6	Queenston	A. Underhill.....	...	...	...	...	5	...	13	34
7	Rainham	Rev. J. Vanloon, jr., A. Overholt, J. Soper.....	...	1	...	3	1	...	...	78
8	Zion Ch. St. Cath.	Ph. Broadwater, J. Parks, H. Gray, J. Kelsey	1	2	...	1	2	...	...	47
9	Sherbrooke	———, Wm. Funy.	...	...	...	1	5	1	...	44
10	Hamilton.....	Rev. A. Booker, J. Freeman, Joseph Curtis, S. Lewis...	3	...	...	4	...	...	...	68
11	Drummondville.	Rev. A. Cleghorn, J. E. Eaton, Luke Carrol	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	32
12	Font Hill.....	Rev. D. Way, J. Winger, S. Emmitt, D. Myers.....	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	21
13	Niagara	F. Lacey, J. Washington, H. Garrett.....	...	...	...	6	...	1	...	27
		Total.....	8	9	1	26	29	3	13	623

X. Appointed W. Rees, R. Boyd, and A. Cleghorn, to examine the Circular Letter.

XI. The Prudential Committee presented the following as their report, which was unanimously adopted:—

1. That Rev. W. Sawyer preach this evening at half-past seven o'clock: that the Rev. J. Winterbotham preach in Zion church at the same time.

2. That to-morrow, from nine till ten o'clock, the hour be spent in devotional exercises: that brother Winterbotham lead the same.

3. That at ten o'clock, Rev. J. M. Cramp preach, and that immediately after he and Rev. R. Boyd present the claims of the Canada Baptist Missionary Society.

4. That to-morrow afternoon, Rev. J. Marsh preach: that Rev. J. Vanloon, junior, preach to-morrow evening at seven o'clock: that Rev. D. Way preach at the same time in Zion church.

5. That the Association meet next year with the church in Beamsville: that Rev. J. Vanloon, junior, preach the opening sermon: that Rev. W. Hewson be his alternate; and that Rev. A. Cleghorn write the Circular Letter.

6. That on Sabbath, Rev. W. Rees preach at eleven o'clock, A.M.; and immediately after, Rev. S. T. Griswold present the claims of the American Baptist Missionary Union; and that a collection be taken in aid of the same.

W. Hewson, *Chairman.*

XII. Moved by Rev. J. Winterbotham, seconded by Rev. W. Rees, and adopted:—

That the churches composing this body be affectionately requested to send in their Letters a statistical account of their Sabbath Schools.

XIII. The following preamble and resolution were moved by Rev. J. Winterbotham, seconded by Rev. J. M. Cramp, and unanimously adopted, viz.:—

Whereas, the University of King's College, Toronto, is exclusively in the hands of the Episcopalians, as far as regards theological instruction;—and, whereas, the Common Schools of Canada West are to a considerable degree inefficient, through the small number of qualified teachers, and the want of uniformity of system; and, whereas, it is necessary to prevent the intrusion of sectarian religious instruction into those Schools;—therefore,

Resolved,—That it be recommended to the churches composing this Association, to petition the Provincial Parliament for such an adjustment of the affairs of King's College as shall throw it open, without the least restriction, to students of every class, leaving instruction in theology to be provided by each sect, at its own expense;—and, also, for a revision of the School Act for Canada West, with a view to enactments that shall secure the training of teachers, uniformity of system, and the provision of good general education, so arranged as that instruction in religion shall in no case be communicated at the expense of the public.

XIV. Moved by Rev. J. Vanloon, junior, seconded by Rev. W. Rees, supported by Rev. J. M. Cramp, and adopted:—

Whereas, the Executive Committee of the American Baptist Missionary Union has sent among us the Rev. S. T. Griswold to plead the cause of Foreign Missions;—therefore,

Resolved,—That in the action of Committee we see the hand of God; that we, therefore, commend the cause to the liberality of the churches; and would heartily recommend the said Agent to the churches not yet visited.

XV. That the Constitution be so altered as that the Association be held on the Wednesday and Thursday before the third Friday in June.

XVI. Association adjourned till nine o'clock to-morrow morning. Prayer by the Moderator.

Morning Session.

SATURDAY, *June* 19, 1847.

Association was opened by prayer, by Rev. J. Winterbotham.

XVII. Committee on Circular Letter reported that they recommend the reading and adoption of the same.

The Letter being read, it was unanimously adopted, and ordered to be printed in the Minutes.

XVIII. At 10 o'clock, Rev. J. M. Cramp preached from Psalm lxxii. 4, and made interesting statements respecting the operations of the Canada Baptist Missionary Society; after which, a collection was taken of £2.

GRANDE LIGNE MISSION.

XIX. Moved by Rev. W. Rees, and seconded by Rev. J. Vanloon, junior:—

Whereas, successful efforts have been made to evangelize the Roman Catholic inhabitants of Canada East, by means of the Grande Ligne Mission, founded by Madame Feller in the year 1836; and, whereas, the said Mission is now in connection with the Baptist denomination, being under the control of the Canada Baptist Missionary Society;—therefore,

Resolved,—That, regarding the evangelization of the Roman Catholic population of this Province as presenting a sphere of usefulness peculiarly appropriate to Baptists, whose opposition to Popery in all its forms is matter of historical record, this Association recommend to the churches to aid the Grande Ligne Mission by their contributions, and to seek the divine blessing on its labors by their earnest prayers.

The above was carried unanimously.

CANADA BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

XX. *Resolved*,—That we hereby record our increased confidence in the Canada Baptist Missionary Society, and rejoice in the success which has attended its labors of love; and as it is still extending its operations, and as new calls are constantly being made upon its funds, we would respectfully urge upon our churches the necessity of making every exertion to sustain and extend such a glorious work.

MONTREAL REGISTER.

XXI. *Resolved*,—That, as the *Montreal Register* contains much interesting and instructive information, and defends the civil and religious liberties of Canada, this Association recommends to the members of the churches to subscribe to that periodical, the profits of which are applied to missionary purposes.

Adjourned for one hour. Prayer by Rev. W. Sawyer.

Afternoon Session.

Prayer by Rev. W. Rees.

XXII. *Resolved*,—That the churches of this body be requested to state in their Letters, the several amounts paid for benevolent objects, and the Clerk be instructed to insert the same in the Minutes; and, also, that the Corresponding Secretary send a copy of the same to the Secretaries of the Societies to whom such contributions are given.

XXIII. Whereas, total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks as a beverage, is the imperative duty of every Christian;—therefore,

Resolved,—That we earnestly recommend to *every member* of the Baptist churches, to practice TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

XXIV. Whereas, the church at Font Hill, located in an interesting field, is engaged in building a house of worship; and as the said church is weak in pecuniary matters;—therefore,

Resolved,—That we commend the said church to the sympathies and benevolence of our churches.

XXV. At two o'clock, Rev. J. Marsh preached from Matt. xiii. 1—23.

XXVI. Association adjourned to meet with the Baptist church in Beamsville, at ten o'clock, on the Wednesday before the third Friday in June, 1848, (D.V.)

Prayer by Rev. J. M. Cramp.

W. HEWSON, *Moderator*.
A. CLEGHORN, *Clerk*.

*** On Lord's day morning, the Rev. W. Rees preached from Rev. vii. 15—17; after which, the Rev. S. T. Griswold presented the claims of the American Baptist Missionary Union, and took up a collection, amounting to £3 2s. 2d.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Ministers and Brethren of the Eastern Baptist Association, assembled in St. Catherines, to the various Churches composing the same. Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, be upon you all.

In sending forth to you, upon this occasion, our Annual Circular, we beg to direct your attention to the subject of *Systematic Benevolence:* a subject of vital importance to the prosperity of our beloved Zion, when we take into consideration the place which it occupies in the Divine arrangement, in reference to the kingdom of Jesus Christ, for it stands forth prominently in the oracles of truth, among the duties which are enjoined upon every follower of the dear Redeemer.

Benevolence is a virtue which every Christian must possess, and, in proportion as it pervades the heart, and is exhibited in the life, so is he like his Divine Master. It is one of the constituent elements of Christianity. The angel which announced the commencement of a new Dispensation, by the Advent of the Messiah, describes it as having one main direction in reference to God, viz., his glory, and a two-fold influence among men, first, producing peace on earth, and secondly, creating, cultivating, and extending good will to man. This good will or benevolence includes the frame of mind—the renewing of the nature, which induces love to all our fellow-creatures; and also, the exhibition of that new nature in devising and carrying out plans of enlarged and heaven-directed usefulness. This is benevolence, and, by Systematic Benevolence, we mean the so arranging all our temporal affairs, that every object worthy of our Christian exertion and sympathy shall have its claims promptly responded to, in accordance with an adopted system of action and contribution. On this subject both the Old and New Testaments are explicit. The evangelical rule laid down for Systematic Benevolence is as follows: see 1 Cor. xvi. 2; 2 Cor. ix. 7; "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him; every man, according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver."

Here the Christian is required to devote, weekly, a certain portion of his substance for the service of God; not as his covetousness, or pride, or prodigality may dictate, but in the fear of God, according as God hath blessed him. It is not to be with him a matter of impulse, but of principle, not irregularly or occasionally, but uniformly and constantly, so that every benevolent enterprize in which he may engage, can progress with vigour and attain to ultimate success, without the fear of failure.

Dear brethren, here is a principle laid down, upon which, as Christians, we are bound to act. Permit us now to direct your attention to some of the enterprizes to which this principle should be applied.

1st. System is imperatively demanded of us in reference to *Ministerial Support.* No one will deny that those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel, or that it is the duty of churches to sustain their pastors; and yet how many of our churches are destitute of pastors, and many others are but partially supplied with the ministration of the word. Now the want of an efficient ministry does not arise from the limited number of Baptists, or from their great poverty, but from the absence of a proper system of raising means to secure and pay devoted ministers. There is no church within this Association which would not be able, by the adoption of a proper system of action on this point, to support a pastor in such a manner, that all his time, and all his energies, might be devoted to the cause of God among the people of his charge. This is a subject worthy of your serious and prayerful consideration, while, at the same time, the present state of our denomination calls for prompt and systematic action.

2d. *Sunday Schools.* The rising generation has peculiarly a strong claim upon us. They look to us with intense interest for aid to lead them into the paths of knowledge and virtue, by giving their expanding minds the right direction. Shall they look in vain? Shall we fail of discharging our duty to them, when, by systematic effort, means might be raised and talents employed that would secure and perpetuate a Sunday School in every church, where gospel principles would be infused into the minds of the young, and their heads and hearts be so cultivated, that a rich harvest of souls would crown the labours, and abundantly reward the efforts employed? It is to systematic benevolence directed towards this object, more perhaps than to any other, that we must look for the increase of our churches, and the multiplication of efficient labourers in the vineyard of our Lord. It is from the ranks of the young that the vacant places of the departed must be filled up. And shall we forego these immense advantages by not employing system in this enterprize, by which alone results so highly desirable can be secured?

3d. *Missions.* The command of Christ to his disciples, to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," is, and will be till the work is done, as binding upon every Christian now, as it was when it first fell from his sacred lips. It is not by spasmodic effort, and occasional exertion, that this is to be done; it requires our benevolence to be always active, our efforts to be properly systematized. This duty can be discharged in no other way. Missions are divided into two departments: Home Missions, which have as their object the diffusion of the truth as it is in Jesus, throughout

the entire extent of our own land, and Foreign Missions, which seek to bless the remotest regions of heathenism, by sending to every land the heralds of salvation, taking within their capacious grasp all the ground covered by the command. Now, as the genius of Christianity is essentially missionary, each of those institutions has its peculiar and imperative claims upon our benevolence: while we seek by the one to have our own land entirely subjected to the dominion of Christ, by being pervaded by the truth, our sympathies are awakened and our energies are enlisted in behalf of all our perishing fellow-men in other lands, by aiding in the labours of the other. If each Christian would identify his interests with the evangelization of the world, and each church feel that it is, from its very position, a missionary body, our systematic benevolence, as directed toward this object, would, in the aggregate, produce astonishing and gratifying results; our duty to our brethren and fellow-citizens at home would be promptly discharged, while the gloomiest regions of idolatry would soon feel the influence of our devotion and prayers.

4th. *Ministerial Education.* Closely connected with the subject of Missions is that of Ministerial Education. Hitherto Canada has had to depend chiefly upon foreign countries for her ministry, and, as a consequence, her own resources have remained unemployed. Other countries secure to themselves all their sterling, native talent, and, as a consequence, but few above ordinary talent have turned their attention and devoted their talents to the extension of the cause in this country. We need a native ministry; we must have Canadian preachers and pastors; we must call into service the intellect, energy, and piety of our own churches; we must encourage and assist our own young men, so that, as men of God, they may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, prepared, by their piety and learning, to contend earnestly and successfully for the faith once delivered to the saints. We shall then have a ministry that will, from their talent, learning, and devotion, command respect from all, and secure prosperity to Zion. How is this result to be secured? The indifference we have felt on this subject must give way to a lively interest; our supineness must be succeeded by systematic activity. Our ministers, heretofore, have had no advantages for education; their opportunities for intellectual improvement have been so limited, that their energies have been crippled, and their usefulness limited, from the want of suitable preparation for the sacred office. Our beloved fathers in the gospel are, one after another, passing to their reward in glory. They have done a noble work, and brought the churches to a certain standard of knowledge and discipline, but, unless something is done in this respect, we must, as they go away, fall back into the hands of ignorant and inexperienced young men, who, on their part, will have the same difficulties to contend with, and thus, in-

stead of going on to perfection, we shall never get beyond first principles. Our brethren in Canada East have established an Institution of learning, for the sole purpose of aiding candidates for the ministry in acquiring a suitable knowledge for their office. This Institution promises to be a great blessing to all the churches in Canada. But how is it to be sustained? Shall not our hopes in this direction be blighted, unless our benevolence, systematically exerted, supplies the resources?

5th. *Aid in Building Chapels.* Many of our churches are comparatively poor, and the members are not able, of themselves, to erect suitable places of worship, but are compelled to meet in school-houses, barns, or private dwellings; hence they are scattered and remain weak. Something should be done by us, as a body, to remedy this destitution. If an Association Fund could be created for this and similar purposes, by an annual contribution from each male member in the several churches, we should then have the means of assisting one or more of our weaker churches, yearly, to build a proper edifice for the worship of God. These wants would soon disappear, and all our brethren would be accommodated in this respect, and our benevolence thus directed, would be amply rewarded by the increase and permanency of our churches.

We might enumerate many other objects, highly worthy of our benevolent exertions, but our letter would be extended to an undue length; suffice it to mention the Bible and Religious Tract Societies, whose claims, if properly considered, will not be denied, nor shall we seek to evade them. Kindred in their nature, and congenial with the spirit of Christianity, we shall esteem it a pleasure and a duty to further their noble object, as far as lies in our power. We have now glanced at the most prominent objects toward which our systematic benevolence should be directed, in order to give extension and stability to the Baptist cause in this Province, and that cause we consider to be emphatically the cause of God. Permit us now briefly to state some of the reasons which may be urged, why we should at once, as a people, begin to act upon this principle.

(1.) *The position which we occupy.* Standing as we do, the confessed advocates of pure evangelic Christianity, and, from the well-earned reputation of our forefathers, entitled to claim the front rank among the adherents of gospel order, and the champions of civil and religious equality and freedom, a mighty and solemn responsibility devolves upon us, from which we cannot be exonerated. As a denomination we took the forlorn hope of Christianity in its attacks upon the strong-holds of paganism, and God has raised us from the dust. Freeing ourselves from all human inventions, we claim the Bible only as our creed; our whole theological system is the plain, unadulterated, unchanging word of God. Repudiating all the aids of state, and seeking no assistance or distinction from civil enactments, we ought not to fail in any exertions, legitimately

drawn from the Holy Scriptures, to occupy every position from whence we can disperse the gloom of error, and scatter abroad the blessings of that light and that truth, upon which depends the salvation of immortal souls.

(2.) *The state of our country* presents a strong inducement to systematic benevolence. Its geographical position; the fertility of the soil; its unlimited resources of wealth; its extensive agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial advantages, together with the healthfulness of its climate, present it as destined for future greatness. It is in its infancy; but a small portion of its vast extent is inhabited, and all its social and political institutions are yet in embryo; these have now to be fashioned, and it depends much upon us what will be the permanent form that they will assume; whether those principles which are dear to us, as being our peculiar features, shall influence their formation, or whether, when the organization is completed, we shall find our rights subverted and our principles out-lawed. Besides this incipient state of our nationality, we might advert to the character of the immense tide of immigration with which our country is being overwhelmed. These tens of thousands that are seeking a home upon our shores, are generally rude and ignorant; they will, in a short time, out-number the present inhabitants, and exert a vast influence over the destinies of our beloved country. There is a pious duty we owe to these our fellow-citizens: to extend to them the hand of love; to scatter among them the seeds of knowledge and eternal life, and exert over them a hallowed and elevating influence. Can we do this? Can we discharge our duty to this our fair and promising country, in aiding to perfect its institutions, otherwise than by systematic activity and unexhausted perseverance?

(3.) *The present aspect of our opponents* is such as should arouse us to exertions which hitherto we have not made. The enemies of truth have systematized their opposition, and, with industrious zeal, are prosecuting their aim; every device is tried, every energy is called into action. Through unwonted exertion, certain forms of error are spreading their baneful dominion, and fixing their fatal spell upon the minds of the rising generation; communities, professing to be churches of Christ, with unparalleled eagerness are striving to secure ascendancy over all others, by grasping at endowments and civil distinctions. Moreover, the professed enemies of civil and religious freedom and equality, are combined to erase from the birth-right of every Canadian, those principles for which our denomination have, in all past time, contended, even to imprisonment, tortures, and martyrdom. We, certainly, cannot sit down with criminal indifference, and tamely yield the contest. It devolves upon us, by renewed action and systematic perseverance, to secure and perpetuate to our posterity those precious liberties, those sacred principles which have

been so dearly, so constantly contended for by our fathers. A few years more, (if we do not do our duty,) and our enemies will have succeeded—for us it will be too late; the shackles of religious slavery will be bound upon us, and we shall justly be compelled to bow under the iron sceptre of a dominant hierarchy, or flee as exiles to another land.

And now, dear brethren, having briefly shown that Systematic Benevolence is essentially the language of our profession, and our bounden duty—having stated some of the objects toward which this principle should be directed, and a few of the arguments which render it imperative upon us to carry it into action, permit, in closing, a word of exhoration.

(1.) That all your benevolent exertions be associated with faith and prayer, otherwise they will not avail. Pray for great things, "expect great things, attempt great things."

(2.) Contemplate the character and work of Christ; the value of the immortal soul; the short time allotted to us for labour, as inducements to immediate, decided, systematic exertion.

(3.) Be careful that it is from the spirit of *benevolence* to man, and love to God, that you act, and not from sectarian pride or party animosity.

Finally, beloved brethren, "May the God of peace make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ;" to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

St. Catherines, June 19, 1847.

ROLLO CAMPBELL, PRINTER, MONTREAL.